

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 4-9, 11-12, 15-30 and 34-35 are pending herein. Claims 1, 11-12, 15-23, 25-30 and 34-35 have been amended to replace the terms “device,” “software” and “section” with means plus function language. For example, in claim 1 the phrase “a franchisee number managing device” has been replaced with the phrase “said means for managing a number of franchisees.” This amendment is supported by Figure 2 and the specification at pages 23-24, for example. Similar amendments have been made to each of claims 11-12, 15-23, 25-30 and 34-35. In addition, claims 4-9 and 24 have been amended to correct minor matters of form. Further, claims 4-9, 22-24 and 27 have no §112 rejections asserted, and should be allowable. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added.

Examiner Nelson is thanked for courtesies extended to Applicants' undersigned representative during a telephonic interview on June 2, 2006. After the interview, Applicants' undersigned representative provided Examiner Nelson with a proposed amended claim set. In the proposed claim set, terms such as “franchisee number managing device” were amended to means plus function language. Examiner Nelson tentatively indicated that the proposed amended claim set appeared to address her §112 rejections.

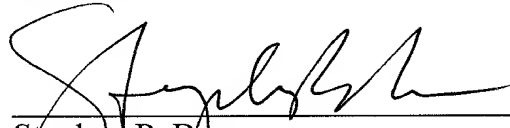
1. Claims 1, 11-12, 15-17, 20, 25-26, 28-29 and 34-35 were rejected under §112, first paragraph. Claims 1, 11-12, 15-17, 20, 25-26, 28-29 and 34-35 have been amended as discussed above to address the issues delineated in the Office Action at pages 3-4. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner reconsider and withdraw this rejection for amended claims 1, 11-12, 15-17, 20, 25-26, 28-29 and 34-35.
2. Claims 17-19 and 21 were rejected under §112, second paragraph. Claims 17-19 and 21 have been amended to address the §112 issues delineated in the Office

Action at page 4. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw this rejection for amended claims 17-19 and 21.

If Examiner Nelson believes that contact with Applicant's attorney would be advantageous toward the disposition of this case, she is herein requested to call Applicant's attorney at the phone number noted below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1446.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen P. Burr
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July 20, 2006

Date

SPB/JAW/gmh

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